

HANDHELDS

FAQ

Q I've heard you can now get maps on a mobile phone without installing expensive satnav software. I'm fed up with carrying an A-to-Z around, so where can I get this software and will it work on my phone?

A Nokia Maps first appeared on the N95, but Nokia then released it for a number of other smartphones, including the E61, E65 and N70. A full list of compatible phones is available at <http://europe.nokia.com/A4509291>. The application is free and so are the maps of the world, which you can preload to your phone from your PC to save on data costs, or download over your phone's data connection as and when you need them.

If you don't have a Nokia smartphone, you can download the mobile version of Google Maps from www.google.com/gmm. This will work on most modern mobile phones, not just smartphones. Google Maps is free, but as the maps are streamed over your phone's data connection you'll need an unlimited data package to avoid racking up huge bills.

Chris Finnamore

Labs Manager

chris@computershopper.co.uk

T-MOBILE Sidekick Slide

★★★★★

Free on £32.50-a-month contract
From www.t-mobile.co.uk

Palm's easy-to-use Treo 500v (*What's New, Shopper* 238) showed that messaging smartphones aren't just for business users, but can appeal to ordinary consumers, too. T-Mobile's Sidekick Slide is the replacement for the Sidekick II, and aims to bring messaging to the masses.

At first glance, the Slide looks like a large Motorola RAZR, but instead of flipping open the phone you slide the screen sideways to reveal a QWERTY keyboard. The phone is designed to be used on its side. You can make calls from your address book with the phone closed, but it's easier to operate the Slide with the keyboard open to type the name or number you want to call. It's very easy to use; the main screen is uncluttered and clear, and you use the trackball to the right of the screen to navigate through the phone's main menus.

The Slide is automatically configured to work with a T-Mobile Sidekick email account, but you can add your own POP3 or IMAP account. It can download email settings for providers such as Yahoo!, BT Internet and AOL but, strangely, not Hotmail. Typing emails with the keyboard is fast, as the keys are fairly large and well spaced. The clear screen makes it easy to read email, but the Slide has more limited support for attachments than most Windows Mobile smartphones or BlackBerry devices. It can view Word documents, but not Excel, PowerPoint or PDF files. It can view image attachments, though, and they look great on the Slide's vibrant screen.

Like all smartphones, the Slide also lets you view web pages. Its web browser can display full-size pages by reformatting them to fit the screen, but it doesn't cope as well as Nokia's latest smartphone browser with



complicated sites or extras such as JavaScript. The Slide supports only GPRS mobile data rather than 3G or HSDPA, so you're limited to dial-up modem speeds. Despite this, web pages load quickly, as images are compressed by T-Mobile's servers before they're sent to the handset. The phone is available with T-Mobile's unlimited data Web 'n' Walk tariff, so you won't have to worry about data costs.

The Slide's entertainment features include an audio application called Sonic Boom, which can sort music by artist, album and genre, and lets you create playlists of your favourite tunes. The phone has hardly any standard storage, though, so you'll need to add a memory card to the microSD card slot to store your songs. The Slide appears as an external storage device

in Windows Explorer when you plug it in via USB, so you can drag and drop audio files straight on to the storage card. Unfortunately, the phone has a 2.5mm headphone jack so you can't use standard 3.5mm headphones.

T-Mobile's Sidekick Slide is very easy to use and perfect for casual email and web browsing. Palm's Treo 500v (below right) isn't quite as easy to use, but is free on a £20-per-month contract and is more powerful and compact, so is a better choice.

Chris Finnamore

SUMMARY

- ✓ Easy to use
- ✓ Great for messaging
- ✗ Not particularly powerful

MESSAGING SMARTPHONE

Quad-band, 2½in 320x240 resolution screen, 1.3-megapixel camera, GPRS, EDGE, USB, Bluetooth connectivity, microSD card slot, seven hours' talk time, 6½ days' standby, 117x18x60mm, 160g
PART CODE Sidekick Slide
DETAILS www.t-mobile.co.uk

Also consider...

TOMTOM Go 720

★★★★★

£280 inc VAT
From www.argos.co.uk



TomTom's Go 720 is an excellent navigator with full maps of Western Europe, a large screen and clear voice prompts. Its most impressive aspect is the Map Share feature, which lets you correct map errors on the device and even upload them to TomTom's servers for other 720 owners to download. It also has Bluetooth, an FM transmitter and voice recognition, all of which make it the best satnav available.



STANDALONE SATNAV 4.3in 480x272 resolution display, TomTom Navigator software, TeleAtlas Western European maps, 2GB internal storage, SD card slot, Bluetooth, FM transmitter, 118x24x83mm, 220g PART CODE 1M00.760 DETAILS www.tomtom.com
FULL REVIEW Nov 2007

NOKIA E65

★★★★★

£210 SIM-free, from free on £30-per-month contract
From www.expansys.com (SIM-free), www.three.co.uk, www.o2.co.uk (contract)



Nokia's E65 is a compact and stylish smartphone with a slide-out keypad that has large, easy-to-press buttons. It has an excellent screen and a superb web browser that lets you browse pages in their original format, just as you would on a PC. The phone's integrated wireless networking is simple to set up, and the handset supports fast 3G data connections.

The E65 is the best compact internet smartphone around and is great value on a contract.



SMARTPHONE Tri-band GSM, 3G, GPRS, 240x320 resolution LCD, 2-megapixel camera, 52MB internal memory, microSD card slot, USB, Bluetooth, IR, 802.11b/g connectivity PART CODE E65
DETAILS www.nokia.co.uk FULL REVIEW Jul 2007

SONY ERICSSON K850i

★★★★

Free to £100 on £30-per-month contract
From www.carphonewarehouse.com

Sony Ericsson's K800i was the first phone we reviewed that took photos good enough to print. The K800i had a 3.2-megapixel sensor, but the K850i comes with a digital camera-rivalling 5-megapixel sensor.

Like the K800i, the K850i is half phone, half camera, but has a much neater design. The phone is much slimmer, and there's no unsightly bulge on the back. Instead of the K800i's manual lens cover, the K850i has a cover that slides open automatically when you want to take a photo. Both the cover and the lens are protected by a clear plastic cover that tends to attract fingerprints, so you'll need to carry a lens-cleaning cloth if you don't want smeary photos. The entire case is made of shiny plastic, which looks great but quickly becomes covered in finger marks and isn't especially comfortable to hold.

To take a photo you turn the phone on its side and hold down the camera's power button. Just like a digital camera, the phone has a slide switch to select photo, video or playback mode, and the camera starts up quickly. The camera has an autofocus lens and a xenon flash, so unlike most camera phones, it can cope with low light conditions. Daylight photos were generally excellent, with accurate colours and negligible noise, although sunlit areas could be overexposed. The phone lets you adjust exposure to compensate, and the vibrant 240x320 resolution screen provides reasonably accurate previews of your shots.



To capture action shots you can also use the BestPic mode, which takes several photos very quickly and lets you pick the best one. Unfortunately, the lens cover on our review model refused to open after a couple of days, and not even a master reset fixed the problem.

As a phone, the K850i is less successful. Instead of a directional keypad with a central selection button and a couple of soft keys under the screen, the K850i has four plastic ridges around the '2' and '5' keys and three touch-sensitive buttons pressed up against the bottom of the screen, which effectively turn the bottom of the display into a touchscreen. You press on the ridges to navigate menus and use the touch-sensitive buttons to select items. The problem is that there's another set of buttons under the touch-sensitive buttons, and as the touch-sensitive buttons are quite hard to see, we

were often confused about what to press at any one time. The tiny number keys are widely spaced, and while this makes it harder to press the wrong key, moving your thumb across such long distances makes texting tiring.

Sony Ericsson's K850i has an excellent camera, but even after a few days' use the menu system was still confusing and the keyboard and directional keypad are uncomfortable to use.

Chris Finnamore

SUMMARY

- ✓ Great camera
- ✗ Confusing interface
- ✗ Needs constant cleaning

MOBILE PHONE Quad-band, GPRS, EDGE, 3G, HSDPA data, 2.2in 240x320 resolution LCD, 5-megapixel camera, 40MB internal memory, MS Micro/microSD card slot, USB, Bluetooth connectivity, nine hours' talktime, 16½ days' standby, 118g
PART CODE K850i
DETAILS www.sonyericsson.co.uk

CHOOSING A... Smartphone

Follow the steps to find your ideal specs

STYLE: Handset
OPERATING SYSTEM: Windows Mobile 5.0
SCREEN: 240x320; 65,536 colours
INPUT: Keypad
CAMERA: 1.3 megapixel
BLUETOOTH: Yes
DATA CALLS: GPRS
Recommended minimum in grey

1 A smartphone's operating system – Palm OS, Windows Mobile or Symbian – dictates its basic features and what third-party software you can install. Windows Mobile 6.0 has the familiar look and feel of Windows, right down to a Start button, and is found on both handset- and PDA-style smartphones.

The only Palm OS smartphones available are Palm's Treo 650 and 680. There are four types of Symbian operating systems: series 60, 80, 90 and UIQ. Series 60, 80 and 90 are found on Nokia smartphones, while Sony Ericsson uses UIQ for its P900 smartphone series. Windows Mobile 6.0, Palm OS and Symbian all support third-party applications, and there is a vast amount of both freeware and commercial software available.

Symbian is often heavily customised by the phone's manufacturer and so may differ from phone to phone.

2 All smartphones come with a colour screen. A high-colour depth of 65,536 colours is important for viewing photos or video clips.

Users navigate and input information into a handset type of smartphone using the keypad and buttons or a jog dial. PDA-style smartphones usually have a touch screen, and both Windows Mobile and Palm have handwriting recognition features as well as onscreen keyboards. A few have a built-in QWERTY keyboard.

3 Cameras are common in smartphones. Resolution is limited, with three megapixels being the best you'll get. However, as most images will be viewed only onscreen or sent as video messages, this shouldn't be a problem for most people.

4 Bluetooth makes it easier to link your phone to a PC for synchronisation or wireless web access. For internet access, a GPRS or 3G mobile contract is essential. Data is usually billed per megabyte downloaded, but if you sign up for a data bundle when buying your smartphone it will work out cheaper.

ARCHOS 405

★★★★★

£119 inc VAT
From www.dabs.com

Archos's latest budget portable media player replaces the 404.

Unlike the 404, it has 2GB of flash storage instead of a 30GB hard disk, but it can take up to 16GB of extra storage in its SDHC card slot. The player is easy to use, and video looks good on the bright and clear screen. It's good value, and will become better value as SDHC cards drop in price.



PORTABLE MEDIA PLAYER 3½in 320x240 resolution LCD, 2GB storage, SDHC card slot, plays MPEG4 (DivX, XviD), WMV, MPEG1 and MPEG2 with optional plug-in (all up to DVD resolution), plays MP3, WMA, protected WMA, Wav, AAC with optional plug-in, five hours' video playback, 16 hours' audio playback, USB2, 100x13x78mm, 146g PART CODE 105914EU V2 DETAILS www.archos.com FULL REVIEW Jan 2008

PALM Treo 500v

★★★★★

Free on £20-per-month contract
From www.vodafone.co.uk



Palm's Treo 500v is a great-looking Windows Mobile phone with a QWERTY keyboard. Palm has heavily customised the operating system, so it's far simpler to use than most Windows Mobile phones. The keyboard's easy to use, and the Google Maps and Messenger applications are particularly useful. It's also free on a cheap mobile contract, so is great value.



SMARTPHONE Tri-band, 3G, GPRS, 2.5in 320x240 resolution LCD, 2-megapixel camera, 150MB storage, microSD card slot, USB, Bluetooth connectivity, 4½ hours' talk time, 10 days' standby, 120g PART CODE 1060IE-VFN DETAILS www.palm.com REVIEW Dec 2007